

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 17th, 2012

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase, Don Head, Bill Nickerson (Chair), Lise Pratt.

Absent: Erin Grady

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWCF), Ginger Jones (FWCF), John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates), Dick Gilbane (Friends of Goddard Mansion), Chris Closs, Ken Thompson, Frank Marston.

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

Bill N called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of minutes of the April 17, 2012 regular meeting:

Dan motioned approval and Bill B seconded; all approved.

Public comment for items not on the agenda: None.

FWCF Update:

Steve Bates opened his report by introducing Ginger Jones, who has been on the job for just a few weeks as development professional for FWCF and the Arboretum campaign. Ginger comes with a wide range of fundraising experience that made her a great fit for this new position. Steve continued:

- Battery Blair: An update meeting with Renner Woodworth is scheduled for 9:30 AM on May 30 at the Public Works Facility.
- Arboretum: Planting continues at Cliffside and is anticipated to be completed by the end of June. A donor appreciation event is being discussed for later in the summer. There was a major clearing workday on May 12 with nearly 100 volunteers, including students from Riverview Foundation. There will be a series of workdays planned throughout the summer; CE schools and CELT will coordinate a workday for 8th graders on May 31st and June 1st.
- Family Fun Day: FWCF will help with ticket sales; Arboretum will have a booth selling their Garden Tour tickets
- Garden Tour (July 14): Tickets are now available through various outlets. There will be 8-9 gardens this year, including Cliffside as the welcoming site.
- There are a handful of grants pending, most for Children's Garden and Lighthouse View site design. The grant from Rotary for design of the Children's Garden must be spent in 2012; the design will be the winner of a 5-way competition.
- Budgeting: They are drafting projections for both operational and capital budgets for next fiscal year, which begins in July. With Cliffside now nearly complete, they can more accurately develop a comprehensive campaign budget for the Arboretum.

Proposed Cliff Walk Safety Improvements

John Mitchell (Mitchell & Associates) presented various options and costs for safety improvements on a specific portion of the Cliff Walk identified as highest priority. Stainless steel cable railing is recommended, along with erosion control measures. A low stone wall, plant material, and flush stone pavers were also considered in various combinations and configurations. Cost estimates range from \$8,700-\$29,500 and include installation. No Planning Board or DEP approval is needed. Don asked about code; John will investigate and confirm. Commissioners were urged to consider the options and resume discussion next month. Timeline: If decision is made at June meeting, bids could be sent out and opened in July (when funds are available); project could be completed this summer.

Update from “Friends of Goddard Mansion”

Dick Gilbane presented the update; he brought with him Chris Closs, a consultant with Greater Portland Landmarks and Maine Preservation. The Friends have commissioned a structural engineer to review the previous Mansion studies (Oest in 2004; Renner Woodworth in 2009) and provide a current assessment and recommendations with costs. This new study is nearly complete. They are looking at a phased approach to preservation/stabilization and/or restoration. Areas considered for possible re-use include the Tower and Carriage House. Fort Crown Point (Adirondacks, NY) was cited as an example of a ruin without a roof with walls that have been successfully stabilized. Ken Thompson commented that he recommended a “minimalist” approach, as it would be more likely to succeed; he is eager to ensure arresting the deterioration. FWAC asked the Friends to come back with a vision and plan, based on the new study, when they are ready. Periodic updates before that time are also encouraged.

Request to Expand Gift Shop Offerings Beyond PHL Property:

Frank Marston is a food vendor in the Park. He asked for permission to sell his son’s art at his vending cart site, as an extension of the Museum Gift Shop. His son’s art is sold at the gift shop. The Park food vendors are not permitted to sell merchandise; likewise, the gift shop agrees not to sell food. FWAC members asked questions and voiced concerns, mostly about how this request crossed a line that had been deliberately drawn as food vendor boundaries. The request was denied.

Park and Master Plan Process Update:

Bob provided the following updates:

- Town Council voted final approval of the FW Master Plan at their May 14th meeting. Council members were very appreciative of our work and pleased with the solid product.
- Bob will be asking John Mitchell of Mitchell & Associates for a proposal to prepare preliminary design, permitting (state and local) and construction documents on the projects approved in the FY 2013 budget. These projects are Priorities #1, #2 and #7.
- There have been two photo shoots this month (J Crew and Sperry), bringing in \$4,250. There is another half day booked soon from out of state.
- Year-to-date revenues exceed \$89K vs. \$80K budgeted.
- Repairs have been done to some components of the children’s playground. Signs are going up re: appropriate age to use. Issues are often due to adults using pieces designed for children.
- The dogwalkers hosted their annual collection of debris earlier this month.
- The grass is growing like mad, requiring more frequent mowing than usual.
- The Park is now fully staffed.
- All rental buildings are now occupied. Many thanks to Greg Marles.
- \$20K is allocated to the Fire Station in the operations budget.
- Jean Gross is coordinating the bus fee collection and greeter program.

Other Business:

Don reported that the Arboretum would like to work with us to find a mutually agreeable solution to their donation box request, recently considered and denied twice by FWAC. A possibility might be to have a regular (Park-wide) box installed at Cliffside, perhaps relocating the one from the beach to this site. The funds collected at this box would be tracked independently for Arboretum marketing purposes, but the funds would go to the FW Capital Fund with the other donations. At FWAC's discretion, funds could be donated to the Arboretum from the Capital Fund in the annual budgeting process. This item will be added to next month's agenda.

Final Public Comment: None.

Adjournment:

Motion was made to adjourn by Frank, seconded by Don.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Our next regular meeting will be Thursday, June 21st at 6:30 PM at the Public Works Facility.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lise Pratt, Secretary